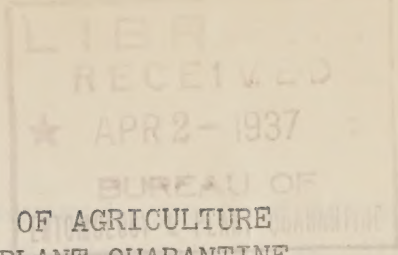


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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
BUREAU OF ENTOMOLOGY AND PLANT QUARANTINE

SUMMARY OF EDITORIAL WORK, NOVEMBER 1, 1934, TO JANUARY 1, 1937¹

In the Report of the Chief of the Bureau of Entomology and Plant Quarantine for the fiscal year ended June 30, 1936, there is a paragraph relating to publications and editorial work which contains the following information: During the year 469 manuscripts were submitted for publication and 451 were approved, 133 of these being subsequently submitted to the Office of Information for issuance by the Department and the remaining 318 being forwarded for publication in outside journals. At the end of the year 103 manuscripts were still unpublished, 78 of these being in the Bureau, 9 in the Office of Information, and 16 at the Government Printing Office. Of those in the Bureau 26 were being considered for publication in departmental series or the Journal of Agricultural Research and the remaining 52 for publication in outside periodicals.

As the last meeting of this character for division chiefs was held in November 1934, there is a period of about 2 years and 2 months to be covered in the present summary of the work of the Editorial Office.

It is probably known to most of you that during several years there had been an accumulation of manuscripts, on hand for 1, 2, or even 3 years, awaiting review or editing, approval, and publication. It is unnecessary here to discuss the various causes for this situation. Suffice it to say that a continuous effort has been made to bring the editorial work up to date, and a record of the results from May 1, 1932, to November 1, 1934, was presented at the previous meeting. It showed that during that interval the number of manuscripts for publication by the Department that had been on hand for a year or more had been reduced from 30 to 9 and that all such manuscripts for publication, either outside or within the Department, had been reduced from 37 to 17. Let us now see what has been accomplished along this line since November 1, 1934. Of manuscripts for Department publication we will take into account only those not yet approved--in other words, those still in the Bureau, not those in the Office of Information or in the Government Printing Office. As chart 1 shows, of such manuscripts over a year old there was 1 on November 1, 1934, there were 9 on May 1, 1935, 11 on September 1, 1936, and 4 on January 1, 1937. Including, with these, all those over 6 months old, we find that there were 18 on November 1, 1934, 21 on March 1, 1936, and 9 on January 1, 1937. Of manuscripts for outside publication over a year old (see chart 2), there were 8 on November 1, 1934, none from November 1, 1935, to July 1, 1936, and 3 on January 1, 1937. Of all manuscripts for outside publication over 6 months old, there were 27 on November 1, 1934, and only 7 on January 1, 1937.

¹Read at the meeting of division chiefs held in the office of the Chief of Bureau on January 4, 1937.

Probably the best way, however, to show the progress made in bringing the work up to date is to classify all manuscripts over 6 months old into six groups, as is done in chart 3, namely, those over 3 years old, those over $2\frac{1}{2}$ but not over 3 years old, those over 2 but not over $2\frac{1}{2}$ years old, those over $1\frac{1}{2}$ but not over 2 years old, those over 1 but not over $1\frac{1}{2}$ years old, and those over 6 months but not over a year old. Dividing these, as before, into Department manuscripts and those for outside publication, we have the results shown on the chart. On November 1, 1934, there were, in all, 62 manuscripts that had been on hand for 6 months or more, while now, or on January 1, 1937, there are only 17. There are now no Department manuscripts as much as 3, $2\frac{1}{2}$, or 2 years old and no manuscripts for outside publication that have been on hand for an entire year.

We hope and expect during the months ahead to clear away entirely these manuscripts that have been on hand for a year or more and at least to reduce greatly those on hand between 6 months and a year. If this is to be accomplished, however, authors and divisions must aid by revising and returning manuscripts as soon as possible after they have been received or edited. If revision involves such extensive rewriting that a manuscript can not be re-submitted within 6 months or, at most, a year, the Editorial Office should be notified to that effect, as it seems best to record such a manuscript as withdrawn for revision and to enter it under a new number when it is again received.

As shown in chart 4, the number of manuscripts received yearly is constantly increasing. Thus, in the calendar year 1933, 330 were received, 427 in 1934, 444 in 1935, and 459 in 1936. The increase of nearly 100 in 1934 was due in part to the consolidation of the two former bureaus and in part to the transfer to this Bureau of the Insecticide Division of the Bureau of Chemistry and Soils, a division that is a frequent contributor to chemical and other periodicals and that issues many publications in multigraphed or mimeographed form. In order that the present editorial staff, which has not been augmented for several years, may handle this constantly increasing number of manuscripts promptly, and satisfactorily in other respects, it is imperative that authors and divisions cooperate by putting their material in the best possible shape before submitting it.

Let us consider for a few moments the character of the manuscripts that the Department is publishing for the Bureau. The record of the last few years shows that, with the exception of a few circulars, such as those on the Japanese and Asiatic beetles, and the Service and Regulatory Announcements, these are almost entirely technical or semitechnical in character, and that the Bureau has submitted hardly any manuscripts for new farmers' bulletins or leaflets. This is in marked contrast to the record a few years ago, when this Bureau was very active in preparing new farmers' bulletins. It is true that a few farmers' bulletins have been revised and kept in stock, but there are several other important ones that need considerable revision and have been allowed to go out of print because no longer suitable for distribution in their present form and, seemingly, because no one has been available with sufficient time at his disposal to prepare these revisions, or new bulletins to supersede those retired. Certainly the Bureau should be able to command

the services of someone with the time as well as the ability necessary for revising or rewriting these popular publications. The technical results of new researches should of course be put in form for publication as promptly as possible, but popular bulletins and leaflets for the farmer and others, giving directions for the practical application of these results, should, as soon as possible, follow the technical bulletin or article in the Journal of Agricultural Research. Mimeographed circulars, used as an aid in correspondence, cannot take the place of farmers' bulletins and leaflets. Not only is a wider distribution required than is practical for mimeographed material, but printed publications, well illustrated, will alone fully meet the need. Furthermore, a recent decision of the Comptroller General greatly restricts the purposes for which duplicating equipment and processes can be used.

In this connection two questions arise in my mind. First, Should there not be two or more farmers' bulletins on an insect of such diverse habits and of economic significance to so many different crops and classes of people as the Japanese beetle? To treat the Japanese beetle with sufficient comprehensiveness to meet the necessities of all classes of readers would require a rather large publication, and much that it contained which would be of vital concern to some would be of no concern whatever, perhaps, to others. Would not economy and efficiency be best served in such cases by a farmers' bulletin for each class of readers? In accord with such a policy we now have two farmers' bulletins dealing with the noctuid moth known scientifically as Heliothis obsoleta, one dealing with it as a corn pest and the other as a cotton pest. In this instance, of course, the insect, known as the bollworm when it feeds on cotton, goes under the alias of the corn earworm when it feeds on corn, whereas the Japanese beetle is always the Japanese beetle whatever crop it attacks. But should the mere lack of two names prevent the Japanese beetle from similar treatment? And my second question is this: Where we already have a so-called "shot-gun" bulletin dealing with the insects of a particular crop or group of crops, or the insects that are annoying or injurious in a particular environment, why might we not have also a leaflet or farmers' bulletin dealing separately with each of the more important insects treated of necessity very briefly in the "shot-gun" bulletin? Unless some such plan is followed, the number of strictly popular publications of the Department dealing with the more important insects will be rather definitely limited.

At the present time, then, such popular articles as are being issued in printed form appear almost exclusively in outside journals and are not available for distribution by the Bureau or Department. Quite a few of these popular articles are being submitted for publication, however, and much painstaking and thoughtful effort is made in the Editorial Office to put them in a form that will make the most effective appeal to those for whom they are written. This popular style of writing seems to be fraught with peculiar difficulty for some of our research workers and authors, and it is in such cases that this office can perhaps be of special help. Sometimes the desirable

revision of such a manuscript involves quite extensive rewriting--a task sometimes more difficult for the editor than would be the preparation of an entirely new article based on the available data, since the editor naturally wishes to follow the author's line of thought and view the subject from his angle.

Referring now more particularly to the semitechnical and technical manuscripts, it may not be amiss to offer a few observations on the subject of manuscript review. The purpose in referring a manuscript to someone for technical review is that he may give it, and the author, the benefit of his specialized knowledge in a field in which he is more or less outstanding or, possibly, has explored farther or more extensively than other workers who may be available as reviewers. To these aspects of the contemplated publication he gives his particular attention. Nevertheless he may, and often does, comment upon the more general aspects of the subject matter, or upon related or other subjects with which the manuscript incidentally deals. He may, too, and sometimes does, comment or offer suggestions upon editorial aspects of the manuscript, since questions of subject matter and editorial questions are so interrelated in a particular case that there can be no sharp dividing line between the two. On the specialized subject matter, his comments are more or less authoritative; on general or related aspects, they are considered advisory and the weight they carry depends, of course, upon the reviewer's knowledge of entomology in general, or of the other science or sciences involved. On editorial matters, his suggestions and comments are always given careful consideration by the editors and adopted when, and in so far as, this would seem to be conducive to the best literary product.

Similarly, an editor may comment on the subject matter, or on the method of handling the data, if, by training or experience, he is qualified to do so.

All comments and suggestions, whether by specialist reviewer or editorial reviewer, are intended to help the author make the best and most effective presentation of his material. To use a somewhat homely simile, the various reviews, examinations, and revisions through which a manuscript passes before it is finally published may be compared to the treatment given some valuable product by its passage through a series of sieves, to remove extraneous material or that which is not in proper shape or condition for the use intended, and to make it more readily utilized by those who are to have it.

In the course of technical review it will sometimes happen that reviewer and author cannot come to agreement. What is to be done in such a case? If the lack of agreement concerns a matter or subject on or near the frontiers of our knowledge, where there is room for difference of opinion, it would obviously be undesirable as well as unwarranted to require the author, in his manuscript, to reflect the opinion of the reviewer rather than that of himself. In new fields we acquire knowledge bit by bit, here a little and there a little. And often we have to revise conclusions first reached, as new data show them to have been erroneous. If a subject is debatable, opportunity for debate should be afforded through publication of opinions and tentative conclusions; it should not be suppressed through the perhaps more or less arbitrary opinion or decision of a reviewer. Further study, observation, and

discussion, similarly recorded in print, will in time show in which direction the truth lies; whereas, if the idea, at first considered erroneous by a fellow explorer of the new field, had been suppressed, the true facts might long have remained unsuspected.

While the presentation of differences of opinion and varying points of view is allowable in publications of the Department of Agriculture, when these pertain to the frontiers of our technical knowledge, the Department must speak with authority and assurance when recommendations, as for the control of insects, are published. Here the responsibility of the Department is great and every possible precaution must be taken to see that these recommendations can be relied on.

An author who, in the course of his work for which he is paid a salary by the Government, prepares for presentation or publication a manuscript containing the results of his official research cannot of course have the same proprietary interest in his publications, or the same freedom to publish what he desires, in the way he desires, as has an author who has carried on research as a private individual and at his own expense. This is, I believe, quite generally recognized by research men and authors in the Bureau.

An author often gives credit, in a footnote in his publication, to a reviewer who has given him substantial help in the preparation of his thesis. This is as it should be, for such help often requires that the reviewer drop, for the time being, his own work and studies and devote himself to assisting the work and studies of another. For the editor-reviewer, however, such recognition is neither expected nor desired. What he does is merely a part of the day's work and his reward consists in the realization that he has been of assistance to the author and that, as is usually the case, the value of such assistance is recognized, and, further, that in his particular sphere he is contributing, in some small degree, to the prestige of an institution that has been referred to as "the greatest research organization in the world"--the United States Department of Agriculture--and to the benefits to humanity which come from the application of the knowledge gained through the researches of this organization.

Perhaps it may seem that I have digressed somewhat from the subject assigned me, namely, the present status of editorial work in the Bureau. Let me say then, in conclusion, that the machinery of the Editorial Office, if we may call it that, runs with less clogging, more smoothly, and with more dispatch than formerly, and that this is due in no small degree to the admirable cooperation that has been so generally given by reviewers, division chiefs and assistant chiefs, and authors--not to mention the office of the Chief of Bureau, of which the editorial unit is of course a part.

Rolla P. Currie,
Entomologist, In Charge of
Editorial Office.

— Department manuscripts in bureau over a year old
 - - - Department manuscripts in bureau over 6 months old

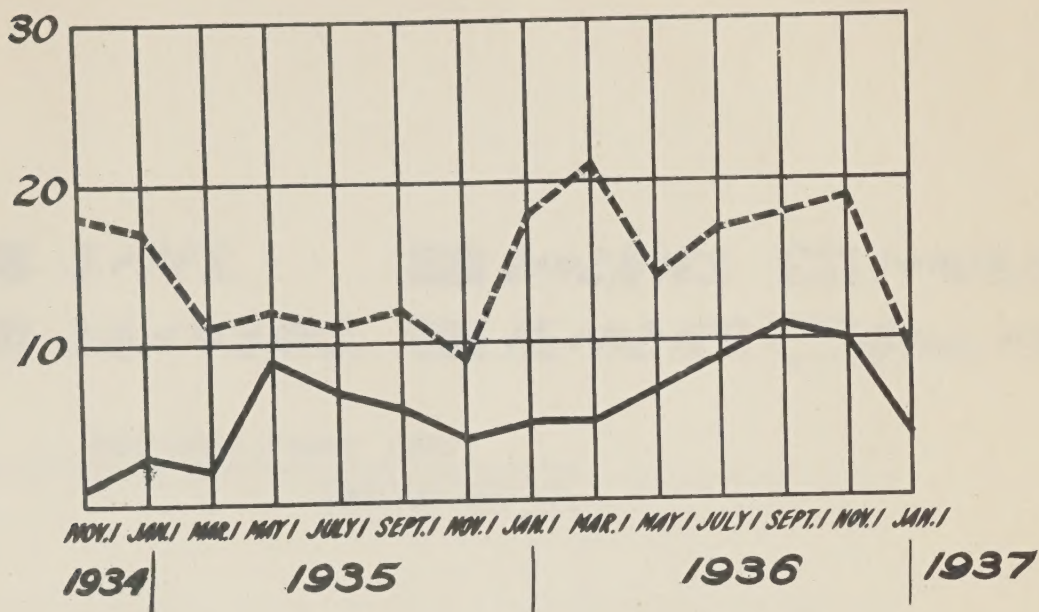


Chart 1.—Status in bureau, at bimonthly intervals from November 1, 1934, to January 1, 1937, of manuscripts for department publication.

— Outside manuscripts over a year old
 - - - Outside manuscripts over 6 months old

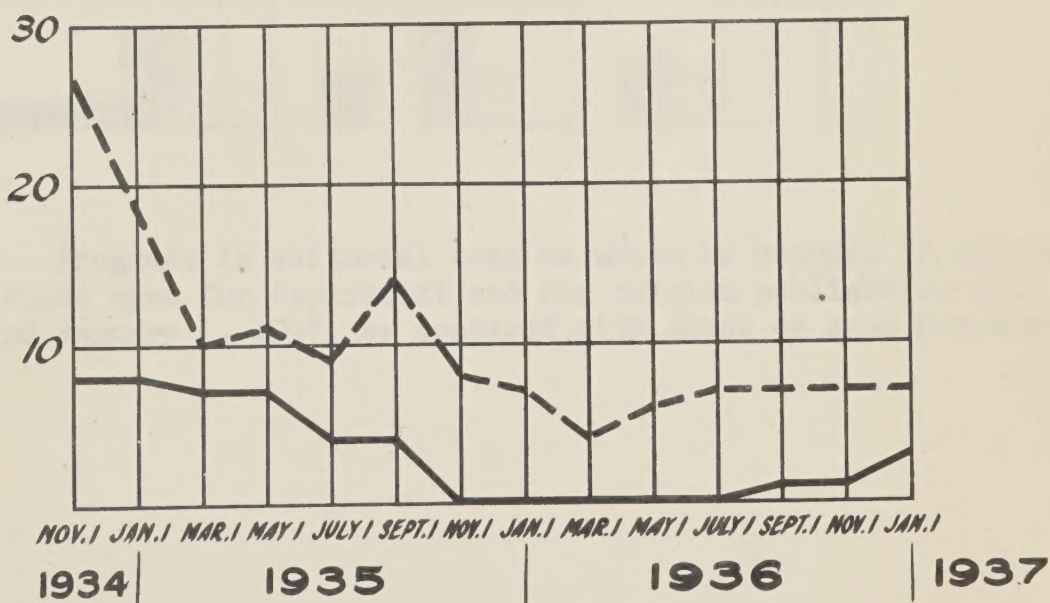


Chart 2.—Status in bureru, at bimonthly intervals from November 1, 1934, to January 1, 1937, of manuscripts for outside publication.

■ 3+YRS. ▨ 2+TO 2½ YRS. ▩ 1+TO 1½ YRS.
 ▤ 2½+TO 3 YRS. ▧ 1½+TO 2 YRS. □ 6 MOS.+TO 1 YR.

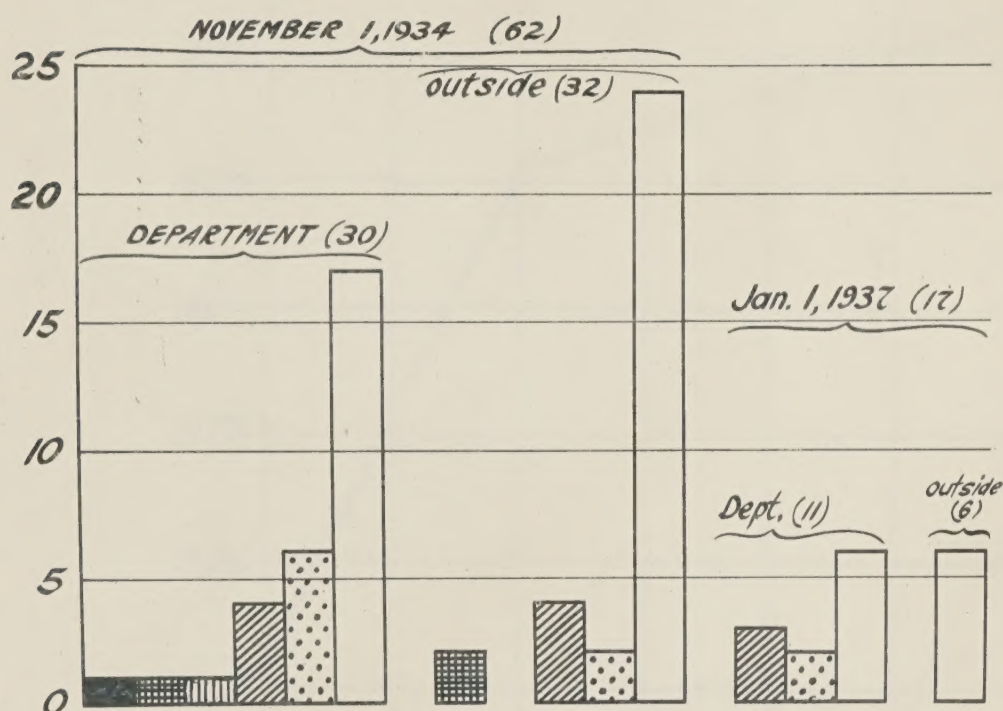


Chart 3.--Progress in editorial work as shown by numbers of manuscripts of various ages for department and for outside publication that were on hand January 1, 1937, as compared with those on hand November 1, 1934.

2000-2001 2001-2002 2002-2003
 2003-2004 2004-2005 2005-2006



Chart 2 - Proportion of all child care hours in the home by age group of children, 1997-2006. The chart shows that the proportion of child care hours in the home is highest for children aged 0-2 and lowest for children aged 3-5.

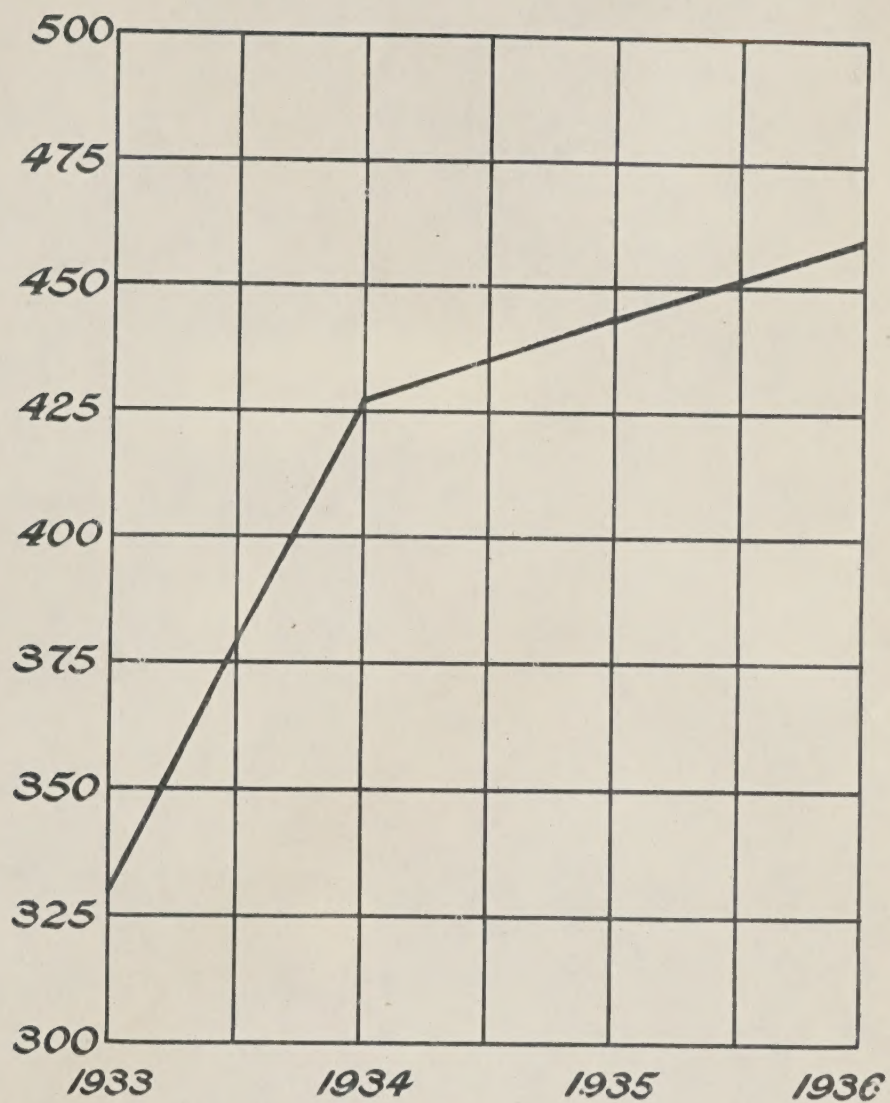


Chart 4.--Increase in total numbers of manuscripts received annually, 1933-1936 inclusive.

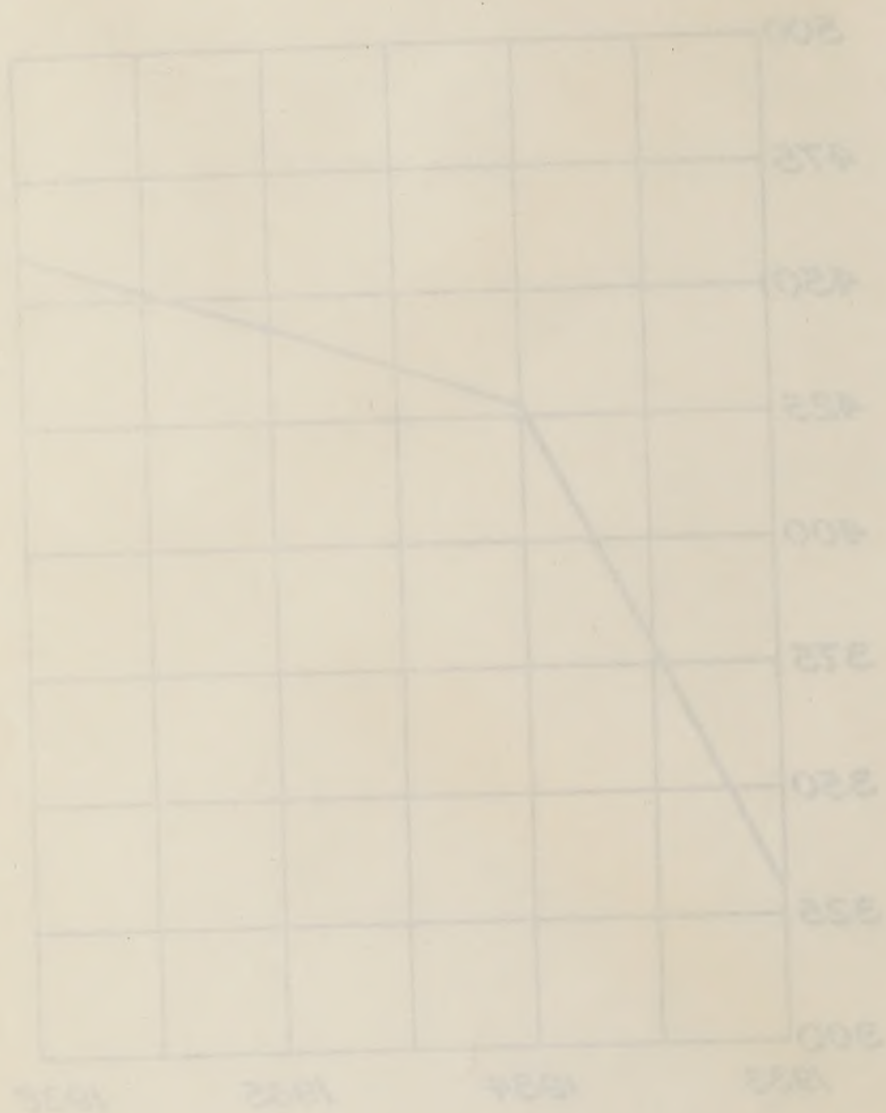


Chart 2.—Increase in total number of employees received annually, 1933-1936 inclusive.